

Michigan Senate Economic Development Committee

May 18, 2011

Re: Senate Bill No. 383

Dear Honorable Members:

If my reading of the bill is correct, SB 383 would largely retain the existing range of tax credits for Michigan film production expenditures. I applaud such a confirmation of Michigan's intention to continue to develop a healthy film and gaming industry.

However, how would this bill articulate with a legislated state budget that sets a small yearly cap on all film-related credits?

How would the Film Office prioritize qualified applications that are competing for a pool of \$25 million?

By the number of Michigan unemployed workers who would be hired? By the total number of dollars invested in local production? By some weighted formula that combines several criteria?

Without an explicit system that states the rules for competition, producers will stay away. Their industry already has enough problems with internal politicking, favoritism, and nepotism.

I have already spoken to one well known Hollywood Director who told me his Michigan project, which was originally scheduled to start this month, is now on hold and probably NOT going to come here. He said they had been planning to "dump a lot of money" in Michigan, but the production is time-sensitive and they cannot wait for us to get our program restructured.

This is a serious disappointment for me, as I had prospects for working on this project, as well as several others in collaboration with the same Director.

Under the No Worker Left Behind Grant Program, I recently completed the Certificate in Digital Video Production at Washtenaw Community College. In marketing my new skills, I have turned up many opportunities. Unfortunately, the best jobs won't be coming here now. Most of my fellow students are in the same boat, left high and dry by the current uncertainty of Michigan's film incentive program.

Sincerely,  
Jan F. BenDor  
QEDVideo.com  
2820 Stommel Road  
Ypsilanti MI 48198